

Curriculum Committee
Year End Committee Report 2016-2017

Mandate

The curriculum committee studies the curriculum of schools and all proposed changes in the curriculum and reports the findings and recommendations to the Provincial Executive, informs members of trends and developments in curriculum, considers resolutions to Annual Council related to curriculum and makes appropriate recommendations, and participates in the NSTU Policy Review Process.

Committee members

Adam Boyd, Chair, Hants West, 2017
Kelli Burgess, Halifax County, 2017
Wendy Gould, Colchester-East Hants, 2017
Chad Hanrahan, Northside-Victoria, 2017
Mary MacLeod, Cape Breton District, 2018
Jennifer Collishaw, Kings, 2018
Bernard LeBlanc, Richmond, 2018
Crystal Isert, Executive Member
Adela Njie, NSTU Staff Liaison (until February 2017)
G rard Cormier, NSTU Staff Liaison (from February 2017)

Meeting Dates

4 November 2016
24 February 2017
21 April 2017
9 June 2017

Activities, Accomplishments, and Initiatives

The first meeting of the Curriculum Committee began with presentations from representatives of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Jennifer Burke, Director of Curriculum Development, described the work teachers did to update the Grades 4 to 6 curriculum. Burke explained the 4 to 6 curriculum is not integrated like it is in P to 3 because teachers said they want students to focus on subject areas. Although teachers feel the number of outcomes was not reduced due to the number of performance indicators, Burke said performance indicators are not outcomes and are not listed in PowerSchool for reporting. The committee expressed concern with respect to professional development (PD) for new curriculum and made several suggestions such as using a phased-in implementation model, and offering PD in multiple formats.

Jude Gerrard, Ian Doucette, and Janet Porter, consultants from Mi'kmaq Services Division, shared what has been happening with Treaty Education in Nova Scotia. Treaty Education is about relationship building and knowing each other and our shared history. For younger children, Treaty Education will be about appreciating, celebrating, and fostering a positive perception of the Mi'kmaw culture. Students will start to learn about history, up to and including the present day, at Grade 4.

Eight representatives of EECD joined the committee at our third meeting. Jennifer Burke, Director of Curriculum Development, introduced Wendy Driscoll, a Grade 9 social studies teacher consulting with EECD to create the new Citizenship 9 curriculum. Pilots begin in two schools in each board in September 2017.

The committee and Taylor-Foley discussed the importance of communication between NSTU members and EECD. Teachers want to know that their voices are heard and that new initiatives will come with support. They feel it is difficult to see where consultation is taking place, and want the process for selecting teachers who work with EECD to be transparent. Taylor-Foley stated that the committee's input is part of a wide dynamic of input and she stated that teachers need ongoing support and not just one-day PD.

From its first meeting of the year the committee discussed developing a survey of all public school NSTU members regarding the implementation of curriculum. The committee studied past NSTU surveys, and created an outline of the topics to include. The Provincial Executive approved an additional meeting of the committee, and at this fourth meeting the committee developed a survey and accompanying cover letter. The survey asks members about topics such as their schools, resources, report cards, use of programs (TIENET, PowerSchool, GradeBook), class size and composition, violence towards teachers, and attendance. The committee hopes that the survey will be available in print and online in September 2017 so that the results can be reviewed at the first meeting of the 2017-2018 curriculum committee.

Recommendations

The committee voted (24 February 2017) to recommend that the NSTU amend policy Section II Curriculum sub-section 25 Curriculum Standards and Guidelines (a) to append "To this end, the NSTU believes that an active teaching member of the Curriculum Committee of the NSTU be part of any Department of Education and Early Childhood Development team that is establishing new provincial curriculum or programming.

The committee voted to recommend Jennifer Collishaw to the position of 2017-2018 Chair. Ms. Collishaw accepted the recommendations be sent to the Nominating Committee for consideration.

Budget

The budget for 2016-2017 was \$7,320.00 and the committee spent \$10,824.00. The over expenditure is due to the additional meeting that was held in June.

Respectfully submitted,
Adam Boyd, Chair